GIBBON EDITED ANEW.

DR. BURY'S NEW VIEWS OF ROMAN AND BYZANTINE LIFE.

THE HISTORY OF THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE. By Edward Gibbon. Edited in seven volumes, with Introduction, Notes, Appendices and Index, by J. B. Bury, M. A.; Hon. Litt. D. of Durham, Professor of Modern History in Dublin University. Vol. I, pp. lxviii, 464. London: Methuen & Co. New-York: Macmillan & Co.

At first glimpse it may look to the ordinary reader as if Dr. Bury had burdened himself with an unnecessary task. Some of the most thorough historical students of the last generation, Dean Milman, the French statesman Guizot, the German Wenck, the Orientalist St. Martin and others, pored over the pages of Gibbon in the search for errors. They all agreed that, considering the range of his work, the corrections required were few. Not many real amendments were made by Gregorovius, in his monumental work on the City of Rome. He had a vast deal of new material, filling up in detail what Gibbon left in outline; but what Gibbon did was usually right as far as it went. The reason for this was in part the temperament of the great English historian. His sceptical moderation prevented him from any such display of enthusiasm as that which flames in Macaulay or Carlyle or Mommsen.

I.

The hatred of exaggeration and enthusiasm, however, led Gibbon to depreciate the value of his own theme and the importance of the men whose names appeared in his pages. "I have described," said he, "the triumphs of barbarism and religion." In this epigrammatic form his opinion of the matter was offensive to the upholders of religion. But in reality they took the same view that he did of the period between the rise of Christianity and the so-called revival of learning. It was the fashion with believer and unbeliever alike to look back to an age of perfection. The conclusion of Gibbon, says Dr. Bury, "tended in the same direction as the theories of Rousseau; only, while Rousseau dated the decline from the day when men left Arcadia, Gibbon's era was the death of Marcus Aurelius." The true reaction against Gibbon was not marked by the criticism, always carping, sometimes petty, of men like Milman and Guizot, who were as fully convinced as he of the deep depravity of the Middle Ages; but it must be found in the new scholarship, which is now daily finding objects of admiration among the statesmen of an empire that to the last was the bulwark of Europe against the East. It might have kept the Turk out of Europe altogether, had it not been for Venice and the Crusaders, whose sad victory was as little to be provided against as a cyclone, a deluge or a conflagration. The difference between the way of looking at Byzantine history characteristic of Gibbon's time and that which is favorable at the present day can be understood at once upon comparison of his study of Iconoclasm with the terse remark of Dr. Bury, in which is resumed the substance of various writings, that "the cause for which the Iconoclasts contended involved far more than an ecclesiastical rule or usage; it meant, and they realized, the regeneration of the Empire."

Dr. Bury remarks that the "key to the history of the tenth and eleventh centuries is the struggle between the Imperial throne and the great landed interest of Asia Minor; the accession of Alexius Comnenus marked the final victory of the latter." A problem of this sort hardly came within the scope of history as understood in Gibbon's day. But economic facts of this sort pressed upon the attention of Finlay, whose insight was rendered more penetrating by his own financial losses. When he began to seek the causes of the insecurity of investments in land in Greece after the Revolution he was led insensibly back to the year 146 B. C., and so became involved in a history of the Byzantine Empire, when he would perhaps have been content to relate briefly that of modern Greece. On Finlay's work the criticism of Dr. Bury is that its value "lies not only in its impartiality and in his trained discernment of the commercial and financial facts underlying the superficial history of the chronicles, but in its full and trustworthy narration of events." Gibbon's "uniform tale of weakness and misery" began to take on a look of variety and of a strenuous, long-continued effort of civilization against barbarism, which he, if he had lived in the closing decades of the nineteenth century instead of the eighteenth, would have been the first to observe.

II.

Besides the elaborate books which began to appear a quarter of a century ago in Germany and France, and a little later in Greece itself, there have been published innumerable pamphlets, entering into the minutest details of biography, law, literature, religion, and at the same time a diligent search for documents hitherto unknown or neglected has been carried on. A year or so ago The Tribune had occasion to speak of one of these documents, a copy of the market and trade regulations of mediaeval Constantinople, "The Prefect's Book" of the Emperor Leo IV. This was only a rain-drop in the downpour which was partly, and only partly, stored in the "Bibliotheca Graeca medii oevi," and "Unpublished Documents" of M. Sathas. There has been something new to say about the most unexpected topics, about the obscure yet wide-reaching subject of Paulicianism, for instance, and the learned world sees now that the Reformation as well as the Renaissance might never have occurred had it not been for the outgo of forces from despised and hated Byzantium. There was something human and natural after all beneath the artificiality which was so irksome to the men of blood and iron who overran the Empire in the vain effort to conquer the Saracens. Not the clumsy, heedless barons and mail-clad men-at-arms from Western Europe were the heroes of the eternal war with Asia, but the mild and silken-mannered statesmen of the Golden Horn.

The activity of research involves a vigorous dispute over authorities, not only the new ones, but those known in Gibbon's time. For example, the controversy over the authorship of the "Secret History," a chronicle of scandal attributed to Procopius, the private secretary of the general, Belisarius, seems endless, though Dr. Bury, who is partial to German theories of the latest origin, settles the matter by deciding that Procopius only could have written it. Then there is a complicated tangle of questions relating to the topography of Constantinople in its finest era, that of Justinian. A few years ago the new Editor of Gibbon was an ardent partisan of the Greek archaeologist, Pospatis, whose most salient peculiarity is scepticism as to the received interpretation of the written authorities. Now, Dr. Bury has made a complete volt-face on this subject and can hardly find terms harsh enough to characterize the inadequacy of Pospatis. Those who wish to know what Pospatis's views are, for example, about the vexed question of the spot on which the Hippodrome stood, will find them set forth and defended in the elaborate work of Professor Grosvenor on Constantinople. Meanwhile, Dr. Bury's latest opinion is embodied in these words: "As the Acropolis is the scene of so many great events in the history which Gibbon recorded, it is well to warn the reader that our sources make it absolutely certain that the Hippodrome adjoined the Palace; there was no public space between them. The Augusteum did not lie, as Pospatis asserted, between the Palace and the Hippodrome, but between the north side of the Hippodrome and St. Sophia."

Whatever may be the outcome of this controversy, it belongs to a field which was practically inaccessible to Gibbon. To inspect the site of Constantinople was impossible to him, and barely more than possible at the present day to a few persevering enthusiasts who are indifferent to dogs and Turks. But the location of the Hippodrome is no trifle, for all the popular politics of the imperial city centred in that vast structure, and much of the effort of recent criticism is devoted to showing that Gibbon's view of this politics as the mere turbulence of circus parties was superficial. Russian investigators, who have in their own politics and social customs a key to certain Byzantine mysteries, maintain that the divisions of the population were organized on thoroughly practical lines. Business interests, and not the mere fancy for the colors of the racecourse, led to those conflicts which have attracted alike the historian and the romancer.

III.

The reaction against the Byzantine portion of Gibbon's history has had an appreciable effect on the earlier portion relating to Rome itself. Mommsen's eager defence of Caesarism strengthened the new tendency. This first volume of Dr. Bury's edition of "The Decline and Fall" shows how strong this tendency is and at the same time how little it interferes with the actual facts as Gibbon gave them. The editor's notes are included in brackets for the sake of distinction, but are numbered, with a single exception, along with the original notes of the author. The exception has a reference by a letter of the alphabet, and is unfortunately marred by the omission of a word. There are some other oversights in the book which may as well be exemplified now; for example, an imperfect French word "justicatif" and "Konsächsischen" in German which might be correct enough with proper pointing. Taking Dr. Bury's notes as a whole, they add to the information given by Gibbon rather than correct him. On specific points—the population of Rome and the Empire, the military system, the relation of Zenobia to the Rome of her time, the supply of the precious metals in Rome, the character of Faustina and not a few others, the notes supplant the statements of the original text. Sometimes, as in the case of the constitutions of the Italian, the note contradicts without really correcting Gibbon. The historian's proverbial caution saved him over and over again from committing himself to positive statements in matters uncertain or subject to dispute. He never allowed himself to be absolutely sure of anything. Almost the only downright error of the pen corrected by Dr. Bury is "Gregory of Nazianzen." A few slips in translation are noted, but none of the kind due to the use of authorities at second-hand. Dr. Bury attributes Gibbon's accuracy in part to his model and guide, Tillemont, and notes a slight falling off historically when Gibbon ventures into a domain which the French historian left unexplored. These particulars indicate the whole burden of adverse criticism which Gibbon must carry.

The most significant censure relates to matters where Gibbon, if he were still alive, might venture to insist on the accuracy of his opinions as against those of his editor. He despised most of the Roman Emperors. Dr. Bury tries to rescue some of them from obloquy. To Gibbon Caracalla was a monster, a fanciful worshipper and imitator of Alexander the Great, puerile and incapable. Dr. Bury's comment is that this emperor, though his policy was borrowed from his father, was an able administrator, whose military works were important. Gibbon ridicules Caracalla's Macedonian phalanx. Dr. Bury appeals to more recent military critics for proof that the "development of the phalanx was, under the circumstances of the empire, a benefit and a necessity." Caracalla's admiration of Alexander was not a mere individual fancy, but a characteristic of the age, and it was tempered in his case by admiration also for Sulla and Hannibal. In the case of another emperor, Maximin, Gibbon really committed the error of uttering two contradictory opinions. Base, ungrateful, dark, sanguinary, cruel and avaricious on one page, on another, "from the prudent conduct of Maximin, we may learn that the savage features of his character have been exaggerated by the pencil of party; that his passions, however impetuous, submitted to the force of reason."

Holding a middle way, Dr. Bury says that "Maximin was a rude soldier, but he was thoroughly well-meaning and capable. He was equal to the emergencies of the empire, and able to cope with the dangers on the Rhine and the Danube. Like Septimius Severus he had no sympathy with the Senate, with Italy, or with the populace of Rome. For him the army was the populous Romanus. The intense hatred, however, which the Senate conceived for him was chiefly due to the somewhat tyrannical rule of his praetorian praefect, Vitalian, who governed at Rome while the emperor defended the frontiers. Numerous inscriptions testify to Maximin's activity in every province in repairing and extending roads." These examples serve to show the aim of this new edition of Gibbon. They give emphasis to the fact that at the present day in Europe there are signs of reaction in the minds of learned men against the democracy of Grote and of modern life, toward the imperialism of Mommsen and of the past. Dr. Bury's plan includes not only notes, but numerous brief essays in an appendix, and an introduction, which should be supplemented by others for each volume, if the work is to be really complete.

STENDHAL.

A PICTURESQUE CRITIC AND ROMANCER.

LA CHARTREUSE DE PARME. By Marie-Henri Beyle. ("De Stendhal.") With Thirty Illustrations by V. Foulquier, Etched by G. Mercier. Translated from the French by E. P. Robins. In Three Volumes. Octavo, pp., lvi, 316, 314, 354. New-York: George H. Richmond & Co.

Sainte-Beuve, writing of the author of "La Chartreuse de Parme" in 1854, found it difficult to speak of him with spontaneous and deep enthusiasm. Thirty years later M. Bourget had no such difficulty. He could analyse Stendhal, in one of his "Essais de Psychologie Contemporaine," with ardent sympathy; showing that sympathy, indeed, with peculiar force, just in his conception of his author as a contemporary. The causes of Sainte-Beuve's reserve and of M. Bourget's warmth lie at the root of Stendhal's character. Spanning in his youth and early manhood some of the most exciting years of the Napoleonic era, he belonged to the Empire through instincts which experience had confirmed and upon which the new traditions ushered in after Waterloo could have no serious effect. Yet he has himself said somewhere that he did not expect to be really read and appreciated until the last years of this century. The disagreements of two of his acutest critics have proved the sagacity of his prophetic opinion. The genius of this eccentric author, sprung from the philosophy of the eighteenth century and nourished on the Napoleonic idea, is to-day more sympathetically understood than it was by his contemporaries. Whether for good or for bad, he is more in tune with our modern cosmopolitanism than he was with the conservative French taste which Sainte-Beuve represented for all his romantic proclivities. The fact that the critic of the "Causeries du Lundi" could not do him full justice does not make M. Bourget's essay a ratification of his fame. But, on the other hand, this starts a suggestive train of thought, it fixes attention upon the idiosyncracies of the man, upon the contradictory elements in his work. To ask why Stendhal is now of more significance than he has been in the past, why Sainte-Beuve should have read him coldly and M. Bourget with delight, is to approach the central facts of his career.

I.

"La Chartreuse de Parme" resembles the even more famous novel of "Le Rouge et le Noir," and much of Stendhal's other work, imaginative and critical, in embodying not merely the philosophy but, to some extent, the actual events of his life. Traits of Fabrice del Dongo, like traits of Julien Sorel, are easily identified with those of the author himself. The descriptions of Milanese life, which enliven the opening pages of "La Chartreuse de Parme" are leaves from Stendhal's own experience on drifting into the last Italian campaign in his teens, and the curious adventures on the field of Waterloo, which he attributes to Fabrice, were undoubtedly developed out of his own recollections of Marengo. Yet nothing could be more misleading than to check Stendhal's stories with his biography, and, because of striking parallels here and there, to say in the familiar phrase, that his life was as romantic as any novel. In some ways it may have been so; in picturesqueness, in adventure, the life of Stendhal was occasionally romantic. But the man had the heart of an eighteenth century "philosophe," and he lived as he wrote, with the cold-blooded temper of the analyst. He was born with this temper. There is something almost uncanny about him when it is seen how steadily he developed a temperament within a temperament, glowing with enthusiasm over Napoleon and his regime, writing romantic tales, and yet intensifying with every year of his life the egotistic, critical passion which was at the bottom of his nature.

Stendhal hated the environment of his boyhood. His family bored him, and his father inspired him with positive dislike. As he struggled inwardly against the ennui of his home in Grenoble the majesty of Napoleon dawned upon him, and his imagination was kindled. When an opportunity came to travel to Italy in the track of the army he seized it with eagerness. He witnessed Marengo with rapture, and soon after he enlisted. Military service did not at that time, as it happened, yield him the sensations of which he was in search, and in a little while he returned to Grenoble, having relinquished his commission. But later, through his friendship with the Daru family, he was drawn into the whirlpool of the army again, and went to Germany, where he saw the battle of Jena and the entry into Berlin. He made the disastrous Russian campaign, and made it with unshaken faith in his idol. He believed in the Emperor to the very end. With the return of the old monarchy he lost his hold upon stirring events and followed the career of a man of letters, living for many years in Italy. An estimate of his character must take this last fact into consideration as one of the most important in his history. That he had the investigating turn of mind which belonged to the eighteenth century is necessary to remember; that military genius in any man or people, but especially in Napoleon, touched his imagination profoundly is also to be noted as essential to an understanding of the man; but that he adored Italy is a circumstance with which one must constantly reckon, no matter what phase of Stendhal's character may be under discussion.

Stendhal was an epicurean whose nature expanded with least effort under the sensuous influences of Italian climate, life and art. He liked Paris, where, in his maturity, he held a high reputation for conversational gifts, and he was even interested in London, but in the south he was more at ease—he was happier. In the posthumous volume wherein MM. Stryienski and De Nion printed the journal of Stendhal for the period 1801-1814, there occurs under date of September 17, 1813, when he was thirty, the following passage: "Au moment où, ce matin à dix heures, nous avons aperçu le dôme de Milan, je songeais que mes voyages en Italie me rendent plus original, plus moi-même. J'apprends à chercher le bonheur avec plus d'intelligence." These words are deeply characteristic. But equally indicative of his temperament is the brief note given in the journal only nine days later: "Milan m'est insupportable. Je pars ce soir pour Venise." The two fragments paint Stendhal to the life. Floating about in his consciousness was his love for Italy, his belief that there, rather than anywhere else, his taste would always be gratified in the most satisfactory way, yet ennui pursued him even in Milan, where he spent some of the pleasantest years of his life, and in his departure for Venice upon the occasion noted in his journal there is a convincing eloquence. Would he have found any city supportable for all the year through, for a lifetime? It is unlikely. He was at once too gross and too intellectual to be long satisfied with the resources of any one place. He was an egotist and an epicurean. He wanted sensations, new ones, all the time. Being a man of intellectual power, he wanted the stimulus of the right kind of conversation, and in search of this it is conceivable that he would have developed into a constant traveller had fate permitted. As it was, he was thrown back upon himself by the wheel of fortune, which would not allow him to be as cosmopolitan in fact as he was by temperament; and the consequence of his introspective meditation was that his literature is to-day exactly the kind which falls into harmony with many of our characteristic sympathies.

II.

It is a restless, cynical literature, full of taste, saturated in the spirit of a man who cares for good pictures, good books, above all for the exercise of the intellectual faculties for its own sake. The writings of Stendhal suggest a man who tested all the things of his experience by the rationalistic touchstone of the eighteenth century, but who anticipated the latter years of the nineteenth, in giving such free play to his personality as to ask of all matters of thought or action: "How does this affect me? Am I to be pleased or bored? In this interesting universe which is called my soul, do these sensations promise to be amusing or otherwise? Have they a place there at all? Is it not possible that they are vulgar, that they belong to the world outside, the world which I am diffidently exploring with a view to importing its profitable and diverting things into my own experience?" Because he was born in the last years of the eighteenth century, because something of the atmosphere of that time hangs over him, because, in short, he was a spiritual heir to the age which produced philosophical dilettanti without number and culminated in Voltaire and Rousseau, it is impossible to detach him from that age. If the tone of much literature that is printed to-day were to be classified on the strength of its resemblance to the work of Stendhal, it might be asserted that we were witnessing a recrudescence of eighteenth century thought. But it is fairer to say that the fastidious materialism of the present time is largely the natural, spontaneous fruit of new conditions, and Stendhal's relation to this epicureanism is something more than a relation founded on resemblance. He belonged to the eighteenth century by virtue of his philosophic attitude. He belongs, in his very grain, to the present day, by virtue of his cosmopolitanism. This was why Sainte-Beuve could not like him altogether.

There is a dreadful irregularity about the cosmopolitan; he has so many standards of taste, he is apt to be so heedless of academic precepts, and since this elasticity of feeling was reflected in Stendhal's style, in the form as well as in the substance of his books, it is easy to understand how Sainte-Beuve resented him. He could not withstand the good criticism, the poetic fervor, the intellectual vivacity which Stendhal illustrated, and as the critic of the romantic movement, he was civil to a brilliant worker in his field. But there was always the rectitude of the academy in Sainte-Beuve, and with this rectitude there was a repose; there was a sanity which found Stendhal irritating. He got on the nerves of his austere critic. Sainte-Beuve admired his good qualities, he sympathized with his romanticism, but plaintively he regretted that in order to be elastic M. Stendhal apparently found it necessary to be lawless. How different it all seems to M. Bourget! If Stendhal is lawless, then M. Bourget begins to have doubts as to the virtue of the law. It has been suggested above that M. Bourget's view of the matter is not necessarily the final one. In fact, the measured judgment of Sainte-Beuve is the judgment upon Stendhal which seems most likely to endure. But that "La Chartreuse de Parme" or "Le Rouge et le Noir" must appeal to most readers to-day as they appeal to M. Bourget is incontrovertible.

One may not accept either of these books as conclusive types of fiction. No modern writer could safely emulate their exaggerations, their eccentricities. From a critic who appreciated good construction as Stendhal appreciated it, "La Chartreuse de Parme" would seem to be a positively discreditable piece of work. It is amorphous, slipshod, disfigured by episodes which are inexplicable on any artistic hypothesis, which have no truly dramatic significance, but serve merely to streak the narrative with vivid colors. Sainte-Beuve said of the novel that it was less a romance than a book of memoirs, and even the most delighted readers of the work will now agree with him. But when all these admissions have been made what is it that remains? When the ignoble quality of Fabrice has been recognized, when Julien Sorel has been dismissed with the scorn that he deserves, what is there left in each of Stendhal's greatest novels? The same charm which belongs to his "Peinture en Italie," to his extraordinary volume "De l'Amour," to his "Promenades dans Rome," to his letters, to his reported conversation, to the whole milieu and product of the man; the charm of an original imagination spurred to creative impulses by a romantic temperament and colored, if not controlled, by a distinguished taste. It is for this reason that the appearance in a passable translation of "La Chartreuse de Parme" revives an interest in all the achievements of Stendhal, in the entire development of his life and work.

III.

Stendhal's personality is revealed at very nearly full length in this novel, which is not, it may be repeated, a record of his career, but which is written out of the very core of his experience, revealing his nature as clearly as though he had set out to make it an autobiography. He has been called a critic's critic, a novelist's romancer, and it may be that a wide public will never be secured for his peculiarly introspective mode of narration. The soliloquies which abound in "La Chartreuse de Parme" may presuppose in their appeal to the reader a certain professional detachment of mind such as Stendhal cultivated in himself and gave to his hero. A psychologist like M. Bourget is fascinated by the process of thought which is typified in "La Chartreuse de Parme." He sees Stendhal making Fabrice do what so many persons, writers and laymen like to do now. He is charmed to see the hero holding himself off at arm's length, even in the fury of an adventurous climax, and weighing his sensations, his ideas, his whole reference to the point or points at issue. Now this spectacle of introspective evolution may require specialized faculties for its full appreciation. Stendhal may be, as indicated above, a novelist for novelists, a critic for critics. But this is not so certain as it may have been ten or fifteen years ago.

Everybody has had his taste of morbid psychology in the last decade or so; everybody, at any rate, is awake to the interest which may reside in a representative of the school, and so widely have the seeds of the analytic spirit been sown that Stendhal must now be a figure of some moment to as many readers as give their attention to the bulk of modern fiction. Stendhal is first and last a romancer in "La Chartreuse de Parme," yet there is a spirit pervading the book which mingles easily with the spirit of realism now in vogue. There is the same tireless curiosity as to motive, there is the same materialistic feeling constantly at work. But with Stendhal there is something more than these things. With him there is the poetic glamour of Italy, and so potent is this that "La Chartreuse de Parme" flows on from chapter to chapter with unfailing buoyancy, and ends, as it begins, on a lyric note. Between its lines there is the attraction of Stendhal himself, of his aesthetic tendencies, of his love for the Italian landscape and Italian manners, the most cynical things he has to say about the latter never diminishing his relish for the life of the peninsula. Moreover, enforcing triumphantly the value of the ego in Stendhal's work, this formless novel has a story to tell in spite of its haphazard construction. It tells the story of Fabrice del Dongo, it compels the reader to take an interest in his personality and career, it holds the attention in the way characteristic of the author at all times, in imposing upon the imagination a certain accent, a certain point of view, a certain individuality. That individuality does not loom upon the horizon of French letters with striking eminence. Materialism is a sterile creed, and a life like Stendhal's begins and ends in itself. Writing out of such a life he cannot be said to have had a wide pervasive influence at any time, or to have such an influence now, when he promises to be most widely appreciated. That Merimee learned much from him, that literary men have always had a fondness for him, has not made him the founder of a school. He interests, but does not fructify. Yet no writer who interests can be charged with landing his reader in an impasse. Stendhal did little to advance literature in France, or elsewhere, but if it is worth while to pause in the company of a remarkable intelligence, then it is worth while to pause beside him. And in no one of his books, not even in "Le Rouge et le Noir," is he more companionable, more entertaining than in "La Chartreuse de Parme," a work as picturesque, as romantic, as it is sardonic and incisive.

RECENT FICTION.

A GROUP OF MODERN "HEROINES."

A WOMAN INTERVENES. By Robert Barr. 12mo., pp. 375. Frederick A. Stokes Company.

BERNICIA. By Amelia E. Barr. 16mo., pp. 306. Dodd, Mead & Co.

IN A SILENT WORLD. By the author of "Views of English Society." 16mo, pp. 165. Dodd, Mead & Co.

A QUESTION OF FAITH. By L. Dougall. 16mo, pp. 290. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

A COLONIAL WOOING. By Charles Conrad Abbott, M. D. 12mo, pp. 241. J. B. Lippincott Company.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A PROFESSIONAL BEAUTY. By Elizabeth Phipps Train. 16mo, pp. 233. J. B. Lippincott Company.

THE WISH. By Hermann Sudermann. Translated by Lily Henkel. 12mo, pp. 309. D. Appleton & Co.

In Mr. Robert Barr's "A Woman Intervenes," the plot is ingenious, complicated and withal plausible. The characters, although not profoundly studied, are observed in sufficient detail to answer every necessity; the dialogue is witty, vivacious, and terse; the situations are dramatic and effective, without being melodramatic. This last observation especially applies to the scene of the stormy interview between Jennie Brewster and Edith Longworth. The former is a young journalist who is sent out to England with general orders from the managing editor of "The New-York Argus" to extract a secret relating to certain mining operations, known to be in the possession of two young mining experts—Kenyon and Wentworth. She embarks on the Caloric, and by means of a series of ingenious questions, whose object is artfully disguised by feminine weakness, she succeeds in learning from Wentworth the contents of the coveted report on the Canadian mine. The information thus gained is promptly converted into "copy," which Jennie mischievously insists upon editing and correcting in the unfortunate man's presence.

Then comes the scene to which allusion has been made. Edith Longworth, as Wentworth's emissary, seeks an interview with Jennie in her stateroom and offers to bribe her into silence. The interview is a piece of most effective dialogue, serving at once to carry the story rapidly on its course, and to allow the author to exploit a number of searching questions into the morality of the particular sort of journalistic enterprise in which Miss Brewster is engaged. Contrast Jennie's appearance in this scene with her demeanor, at a later stage, during an interview with Wentworth in London, and a fair idea of the range of Mr. Barr's skill may easily be formed. It is as impossible not to like Jennie Brewster as it is to approve of her. There is something uncommonly attractive about her audacity, and something very winning in her tears. The reader feels that she ought not to send the cablegram to "The Argus," and yet in that agonizing moment, just as the boat is pushing off for the shore bearing the passengers' messages, when Jennie, with the fatal telegram in her hand, is held a prisoner in her stateroom, it is doubtful if the reader does not give his sympathy to her rather than to the imperturbable Edith, her jailer. The story is full of surprises, the best being reserved for the final page.

With no special pretence to scholarly accuracy Mrs. Amelia E. Barr has succeeded more than might have been expected in animating the pages of her latest novel, "Bernicia," with the spirit of a bygone age. The scene is laid in the reign of George II, and interest centres in the career of the heroine, whose name gives the title to the volume. Bernicia, a vivacious, black-browed, country-bred daughter of a Jacobin family, comes to London to visit her married sister, Lady Fanny. The sisters plunge into the whirl of the gay society of the Court, and Bernicia, by her wit and beauty, soon surrounds herself with suitors. Her love affairs reach a climax when a quarrel springs up between George Abney, the Methodist, and Lord Rashleigh, and his lordship challenges his rival to a duel. Mrs. Barr's analysis of Bernicia's emotions when she discovers this fact displays considerable insight into the working of feelings with which she would scarcely be supposed to be familiar. Commendation is also due her for the skill with which she justifies Bernicia's rejection of both suitors, and her subsequent return to Lord Rashleigh, although it might be objected against this last step—which forms the climax of the story—that the device by which Bernicia's eyes are opened to the true bravery of Lord Rashleigh's character is a little over-sentimental and forced.

Apropos of the warning prefixed to "In a Silent World," that it is "a simple story of a woman's love," which the reader "in search of the sensational or purely amusing" would better lay aside at once, it may be observed that the author is scarcely fair to herself. Her idea of what is simple and unsensational is not the one generally held by readers of fiction. They will find the circumstances of Evelyn Sylvestre's death conceived in a thoroughly sensational spirit. Evelyn, sadly disappointed in love, is walking on the seashore, when, in a desperate effort to rescue the child who is with her, she is "swept away by the ebbing tide." A few hours later her body comes ashore, "an expression of ineffable satisfaction" resting on her features, "as if her great act of renunciation had purchased peace, and the ears, unstopped at last, had caught the divine harmonies of the celestial city, and the lips, no longer mute, had found utterance in the deep songs of joy which surround the throne." The experienced reader will have little difficulty in recognizing the familiar note of sensationalism in this conventional climax. For the rest, it may be noted that Evelyn Sylvestre is a deaf-mute, who falls desperately in love with the young man who rescues her from an infuriated bull. She was imprudent enough to wander through the fields carrying a bright scarlet parasol. When she first caught sight of Thurston Rivers "striding" toward her, "almost at a run," she fancied, for a brief instant, that he was "one of those unfortunate lunatics escaped from the asylum near the town." Her surmise became a certainty when the man seized her hand and began to drag her "up through the steep copse." She was not, however, too frightened to notice that the brambles tore her "pretty summer gown," or that "my hairpins flew about like hailstones, and one long braid escaped from its fastenings and bobbed up and down between my shoulders." A moment afterward, when she discovered the real motive of Thurston's eccentric conduct, she was not only quite prepared to forget all about her hairpins and summer gown, but to give her heart to her rescuer. This occurs on page 54, and it is not until almost a hundred pages later that she discovers that Thurston, having unexpectedly come into a title of nobility, cannot be hers. It is after this distressing discovery that she takes her fatal walk by the shore of the bay.

The problem to which attention is invited in "A Question of Faith" is the degree of liberty in which a young girl is free to indulge, without the interference of her friends and relatives. Alice Bolitho is a strong-minded young English woman, the possessor of a university degree, and a free thinker in matters of religion. She becomes involved in the affairs of some Anarchists, and engages in manoeuvres which arouse the feelings of him whom she is expected to marry. He spies on her steps, and finally takes her to task, for conduct unbecoming a lady. Harvey embodies conventional ideas, just as Alice embodies the ideas of the "new woman." Alice insists that the man who loves her shall accept her at her own valuation. Harvey contends that she ought to realize the danger and suspicion to which her unconventional conduct exposes her. The result is a rupture which does not heal. Alice and Harvey part not as lovers invariably do, but in consequence of a technical difference, which is brought to light in the course of a long discussion. This, however appropriate it might have been in a purely didactic work, has nothing in common with art. The characters are wooden, mere puppets, set in motion to expound a theory.

In "A Colonial Wooing" Mr. Charles Conrad Abbott has told with considerable grace and poetry the romantic courtship of Ruth Davenport and John Bishop in the quaint surroundings of Philadelphia more than two centuries ago. The story is simply constructed, and is written with sympathy. Mr. Abbott's fondness for nature is conspicuous, and comes to the surface with particular force in passages like the description of John Bishop's rescue of Ruth from the vessel which lies off Bordentown, prepared to take her back to England.

It is much to be feared that the success of "A Social Highwayman" is not destined to be repeated in Miss Train's second story, "A Professional Beauty." The books are manifestly by the same hand, which is another way of saying that the narrative is frequently enlivened by amusing verbal sallies, with here and there a touch of cynicism which strikes at the root of some social foible. But despite these superficial merits, "A Professional Beauty" is dissatisfying as to plot, if not at times positively vulgar in diction. Moreover, while it is constantly asserted that "Evelyn" was surpassing fair and ruled like a sovereign by her beauty, the reader seldom is made to feel the spell of her charms—a fatal artistic defect in a story whose success must depend on the keeping of this idea to the fore. The intrigue is loosely constructed, and, despite the sensational episode of the supposed robbery of Miss d'Alembert's jewels, fails to hold the interest, and no satisfactory motive is offered for the heroine's change from the character of a despotic society queen to that of the devoted wife of the constant American.

"The Wish," by the German writer Hermann Sudermann, is a typical example of that morbid class of fiction whose present vogue lends a color of plausibility to Herr Nordau's conclusions. It is a pathological study of a woman's mind diseased by excess of passion and introspection. Olga Bremer loves Robert Hellinger to distraction, but he marries her sister, Martha. Then, after a period of questionable married happiness, Martha falls sick and dies. Olga and Robert watch by her bedside during her last illness, and then it is that Robert, overcome by fatigue, falls asleep in his chair, his head falls upon Olga's shoulder, and then a "wild joy seized me," writes Olga in her diary. "Secretly I pressed him to me—and within me there arose the jubilant thought: 'Ah, how I would care for you and watch over you; how I would kiss those wicked furrows away from your brow, and the troubles from your soul! How I would fight for you with my virgin strength and never rest till your eyes were once more glad and your heart once more full of sunshine! But for that'—I looked across at Martha. Yes, she lived; she still lived. Her bosom rose and fell in short, rapid gasps. She seemed more alive than ever. And suddenly it flamed up before me, and the words seemed as if I saw them distinctly written over there on the wall—'Oh, that she might die!'" This is the "Wish," and it is because Olga is subsequently stricken with horror at the thought of it that she takes an overdose of morphine and ends her miserable, passionate life. The story is told awkwardly, by means of a diary which Olga intrusts to an elderly friend on her deathbed. The distressing tale is not enlivened by a gleam of humor or natural feeling.

JOHN BRIGHT'S STATUE.

From The London Truth.

John Bright's sons have joined in the protest against the hideous caricature of their father, which is now in the Westminster Palace, being allowed to remain there; and I may say that I should not have addressed an inquiry about it to the Chief Commissioner of Public Works had I not been aware that this would meet with the approval of Mr. Bright's sons. Mr. Gilbert may—as his friends aver—be a great artist, and the bronze ornamentation of Piccadilly Circus may be a great work of art. His statue of Mr. Bright, however, is an artistic monstrosity, and were it not that I believe that he does not cumber himself with politics, I should imagine that he had deliberately sought to destroy all respect of posterity for the great tribune of the people. Instead of Mr. Bright's massive, impressive features, suggestive of thought and intellect, we have the rounded cheeks of a smug grocer, and a mouth from which no one could expect weighty oratory to proceed by any effort of imagination. The hair of the head is superabundant, with a suspicion of cosmetics and excessive brushing, while around the face is a sort of rope frame, which, on close inspection, is perceived to be intended for what is called a Newgate fringe. The body is small and puny, and the attitude the very reverse of that of an orator. The legs are not separated, and look as if the sculptor had had in his thoughts a dryad rather than a man, for they convey the idea of the trunk of a tree rather than the limbs of a human being. The general effect is that of the most insignificant person who ever walked the earth, without conveying the faintest resemblance of what Mr. Bright was like. It will be necessary to take the opinion of the House of Commons as to this statue being allowed to remain where it is. In the mean while it is a pity that Mr. Speaker does not have the same disciplinary authority over statues as he has over living M. P.'s, and that he cannot suspend it from further attendance in the lobby until its future destination be decided on.

LITERARY NOTES.

Mr. Lecky's new book, "Democracy and Liberty," contains a discussion of American democracy and pays attention also to nationality as it is illustrated by this country.

It is now announced that the new "Life" of the Autocrat will be published early in May. The appearance of Mr. Morse's two volumes is awaited with eagerness on both sides of the ocean. In England many expressions of anticipatory delight are printed, though it may be recorded, by the way, that one London critic has been making a confession in regard to the "One Hoss Shay," in which he has "never been able to see much fun." To some persons, he avers, "good critics, too, it is the standard in humorous verse. But why is it funny?" Possibly the forthcoming biography will enlighten this plaintive Britisher. The books are to contain much that is new, and the unfamiliar material is said to be marked by some of the most brilliant wit of Holmes.

The life of Thomas Hughes was divided between politics, literature and the law. He had, moreover, strong religious interests. In the best sense of the term he was a many-sided man, and his death has evoked many estimates of his work in half a dozen different directions. There has been, of course, a unanimous renewal of the praise which "Tom Brown" called forth almost immediately upon its publication in the late fifties. It is a curious fact, however, that whether in his best book or any other milestone in his career the character that fascinates in Thomas Hughes is neither the author, the lawyer nor the active participant in religious and social development. It is always the man who makes the first and last appeal; it is always his personality, and almost never his intellectual achievements, by which the sympathies are first awakened. "Tom Brown" is a classic, that is certain enough; but even in this masterpiece of what might be called mature juvenilia the thing that captures the imagination is the point of view, the personal force, the Hughesian enthusiasm running through the narrative.

As a writer of pure literature, the author of one of the most famous books of his time was, paradoxically, of minor significance. But as a temperament making itself felt through the printed page he was and will remain a distinguished figure in English fiction. The spirit of the man is shown with beautiful clearness in the following letter, written to a young American, and hitherto unpublished:

Dear Boy (for you must be a boy still): You ask whether Tom Brown was "a real boy" as "it would be so much nicer to think that he was a real boy than to know that he only existed in a story." No, he wasn't a real boy (unless, indeed, on your side 'boy' is a noun of multitude). He was (and I hope is still, and so far as an old boy of seventy-three can judge, certainly is) at least twenty boys, for I knew at least that number of T. B.'s at Rugby, and there were no doubt as many at a dozen other of the public schools.

What I wanted was, to draw the average English boy, who came from a good pious English country home, not particularly clever or studious, but with good Church catechism training, which wouldn't let him be an idle loafer, though he might look on the masters as "the other side" in the education game, and so long as they played the game fairly, would respect and like them, as he did "the other side" at football.

If you want to meet a specimen on your side you will find one of the type at Hymen ranche in the Pan Handle of Texas, where our youngest boy is the managing partner of a cattle ranche. He never could take kindly to Latin, Greek or mathematics, but learned "to ride, shoot and tell the truth," which was (according to Herodotus) considered the best result of the higher education amongst the persons of 2,000 years ago. Almost all of such boys get fond of good healthy literature later on, and regret that they didn't "sap" at school, but I doubt whether they would have made half as good Englishmen even if they had learned to turn out good "longs and shorts" or Greek alcaics before they left school.—Yours very truly,

THOMAS HUGHES.

Chester, 3-11-'95.

Alack and alas for the devotees of Van Bibber! They must be grievously disappointed in his latest adventure. The truth is, it is scarcely an adventure at all, but a laboriously contrived episode out of which Mr. Davis has made a story called "Cinderella." This tale is printed in the current number of "Scribner's Magazine," and is to be reprinted in a volume with other productions of its author. Why it should be reprinted, why Mr. Davis should have printed it, anyway, will remain something of a mystery. For Van Bibber, as he has been known hitherto, has been a most entertaining person, and now the revived Van Bibber, the new Van Bibber, is simply a wearisome young person, who becomes involved in a series of trivial events and comes to a lame and impotent conclusion. Mr. Davis has done nothing funnier than the "serious" passage at the close of the story.

That an author is not always to be treated with impertinence after his death, through the meddlesome "enterprise" of those into whose hands his MSS. may happen to fall, has lately been shown in a somewhat unexpected quarter. Years ago Beaudelaire wrote an attack upon Belgium and the Belgians. He never saw fit to print it. It passed into the hands of M. Greiot, a French collector of MSS. and after his death a while ago it was secured by a Parisian publisher. He made arrangements to print it recently but the heirs-at-law of Beaudelaire were in the field instantly and threatened to appeal to the courts if the work were brought out. This seems to have effectually tied the hands of the publisher and the work is left in the oblivion to which it probably belongs. It is interesting to note, apropos of this episode and the manner in which an author's reputation is trifled with by his "posterity," that a professor of Berne has come forward in a German magazine devoted to such matters, the "Biographische Blaetter," and demanded that the laws of biographical art be defined and established. It is certainly time that the duties of literary executors at least were clearly formulated. "Discretion" ought to be rigidly denied to them.

A new book of an odd character is about to be published by the Longmans. It is written by Dr. Thomas N. Orchard, and is to deal with "The Astronomy of Paradise Lost."

When Captain Mahan's authoritative work on "The Influence of Sea Power in History" appeared, the English reviewers found only one objection to bring against it. The book should have been written by an Englishman, they said, since it dealt so much with the English Navy, and they have been asking ever since for an adequate British naval history. Such a history is promised now. It is to be brought out in London under the general editorship of Mr. W. Laird Clowes; it will cover the development of the Navy from the earliest times to the present day; it will be elaborately illustrated, and it will be the work of the best known naval writers of England, "and of America."

The Century Company announces a book on "The White Pine," by Gifford Pinchot and Henry S. Graves, with the observation that it offers "the first systematic study of any American tree." Would the monumental work on "The Silva of North America," which Professor Sargent is publishing, be considered unsystematic?

The unpublished correspondence of Victor Hugo, which is being put in shape for the press, and which will probably be accessible to the public this summer, is divided into five sections. The first includes the letters written to the elder Hugo at Blois in 1820; the second is devoted to the poet's love letters, those written before and just after his marriage, and the third will be filled with epistles to the "Academy of Floral Games." In the fourth section is the bulk of the correspondence referring to "Hernani," "Marion Delorme," and "Le Roi s'Amuse." Lastly, there are some letters to Lacretelle and Victor Pavie, with about fifty addressed to Sainte-Beuve. It is asserted that the series "reads like a novel." It will be published in an English translation not long after the appearance of the French edition.

The Olympian games at Athens have set all the magazines to work, and there is an absolute flood of descriptive literature being published every week. Professor Richardson's paper in "Scribner's" is one of the best in this mass of recent productions on the subject. He is erudite without being dry, and his text is accompanied by admirable pictures. The imaginative narrative by Duffield Osborne, "A Day at Olympia," is apropos and ambitious, but it is extraordinarily difficult to do a thing like this well, and Mr. Osborne has not quite reached his goal. In the forthcoming "Century" the revival of the Greek games will be discussed by Baron de Coubertin, who has much to do with the arrangement of the affair. Many writers of to-day are qualified to describe the occurrences at Athens, but nothing that any of them may do will diminish the regret that Walter Pater is not living to write such an essay on the games as he alone could write. It would be obscure, it would be lacking in fire, it would exasperate, no doubt, in its failure to give the clear, sharp, ringing description which is most to be desired. But with all his defects, Pater would unquestionably have produced a memorable piece of work had he lived and cared to celebrate the Athenian festival of athletics. There are passages in his books which might be cited in support of the surmise that he would have attacked the theme with enthusiasm.